

Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer among women (aside from skin cancer). An estimated 178,580 women were diagnosed in 2007. The diagnoses of breast cancer in men adds another 2,030 cases to the 2007 figure. When found and treated early before it spreads, the five-year survival rate for breast cancer is 98 percent.

PREVENTION

- Eat a low-fat diet.
- Exercise regularly.
- Drugs are available to help prevent breast cancer in women at high risk.

RISKS

- All men and women
- Women more than 50 years old are at higher risk
- Women and men with a family history of breast cancer
- Women and men with inherited abnormal genes
- Women who had breast cancer in one breast
- Obese men and women with a sedentary lifestyle

SYMPTOMS

- A lump, mass or thickening in the breast
- Change in the size or shape of a breast
- Nipple pain, tenderness or discharge, including bleeding
- Nipple that is turning inward, or inverted
- Change in skin color and texture: dimpling, puckering or irritation
- Breast that feels warm or swollen and looks red

EARLY DETECTION

- Beginning at age 20, perform breast self-exams (BSE) once a month.
- In your 20s and 30s, have breast exams by a health care professional every three years.
- Beginning at age 40, have annual breast exams by a health care professional.
- At age 40, begin annual screening mammography (a breast X-ray).
- Women at high risk should talk to their health care professional about beginning screening mammogram at a younger age.
- Women at very high risk may also have yearly MRI exams (magnetic resonance imaging).

TREATMENT

Therapy depends on the type of cancer and whether the cancer has spread beyond the breast.

- Surgery – mastectomy (breast removal) or a lumpectomy (removal of the tumor).
- Chemotherapy and/or radiation and/or hormone therapy before or after surgery.